

# The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, March 21, 1996

Published Since 1877

## 367 new churches prove "Last Frontier" reachable

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — "The Last Frontier" of missions might be unreachable, but it's not unreachable.

Foreign Mission Board (FMB) missionaries and their overseas partners proved that in 1995. They started 367 churches and baptized 6,548 new believers in some of the toughest places on earth.

Those churches sprang up among people groups collectively called The Last Frontier, or "World A" — 2,466 groups, adding up to 1.7 billion people, largely denied access to the Christian gospel by hostile cultures, religions, and governments. Many live in the Muslim world of north Africa, the Mideast, and Asia.

The new churches account for nearly 15%

of the 2,612 churches begun worldwide last year by Southern Baptist missionaries and their overseas partners. The Last Frontier ranked third-highest in new churches among the 10 world regions identified by the FMB.

Adding to the significance of this: Missionaries assigned to these peoples began with a support base of zero churches only a few years ago — not the hundreds or thousands of established congregations in older, stronger mission fields.

"These are the hardest places in the world," explained evangelism and church growth analyst Jim Slack, who compiled the recently released FMB statistical report for 1995. "They have the least number of churches, the

### Missions' 'Last Frontier' — tough but reachable

Foreign Mission Board missionaries working among some of the world's least-evangelized peoples report these results over the past four years:

	New Churches	Total Churches	Baptisms	Members	Missionaries
1995	367	1,027	6,548	58,719	429
1994	144	299	3,809	61,739	389
1993	37	131	748	54,553	325
1992	20	55	919	1,830	192

Source: Evangelism/Church Growth Office

(BP) GRAPHIC By Alan M. Perrow



**STORMING "THE LAST FRONTIER"** — A group of Christians prays before entering a town in Mongolia to spread the gospel. In such far-flung places as Mongolia — where there were no known native Christians only a few years ago — local Christians "have become the primary church planters and disciplers," said one Southern Baptist strategist. Southern Baptist workers and their overseas partners started 367 churches and baptized 6,548 new Christian believers last year in "The Last Frontier" — the world's least-evangelized areas. (BP photo by Charles Ledford)

least number of Bibles, the fewest literates. Christians there have to maintain security while they plant churches, which doesn't allow them to fly the missionary or Christian flag to attract people.

"Yet they get the job done even when world religions and governments actively try to stop them. When you look at the odds and the barriers to a Christian church planting movement, their achievements are phenomenal."

Some examples from 1995:

— In one location workers shared the gospel with more than 1,000 people, most of whom were hearing it for the first time. Five churches were begun after 125 people prayed to receive Christ as Savior.

— In a people group with no known Christian church and only one known Christian, two people came to faith in Christ and are now being disciplined.

— For the first time in the history of one

people group, the Bible was translated into their language.

— A young Muslim man, torn from his country years ago by ongoing war, came to a missionary one evening. He had heard about a book called "Injil" (the New Testament) and wanted one. "I gave him a copy in his own dialect," the missionary reported. "He devoured it in a matter of days, and his questions were continuous. He said, 'If my people read the Injil, then peace would come, to my homeland.'" He now talks about Jesus with his schoolmates and has sent a New Testament to his father, who still lives in his homeland.

"The misconception we have is that these are unresponsive people," Slack observed. "But it's the governments and world religions we face that are unresponsive and try to keep Christianity out." Once there, missionaries find responsiveness equal to that on traditional "harvest fields," he said.

### Watch that copier

Inexpensive, high-quality desktop copiers have made copy-right violations common in even the smallest churches, according to Southern Baptist music leaders and a legal expert. "A lot of church libraries contain photocopied music," said Keith Hibbs, associate director of the church music department of the Alabama state convention. Jim Cordell, church music director for the Kentucky state convention, said he has seen entire music libraries created from illegal photocopying. Others believe the copying is permitted as long as the material is not resold for profit. Not so, according to the two musicians. "It is still illegal," Hibbs pointed out. Larry Cannon, legal consultant to the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, put it this way: "The only difference between photocopied music and shoplifting music out of a bookstore is that you're not getting the white piece of paper the music is printed on in the store." For information on avoiding copy-right violations in church-related situations, contact Christian Copyright Licensing International at (800) 234-2446.

### Mission to China

As the political hostility level between mainland China, Taiwan, and the United States continues to ratchet upward, one retired Southern Baptist missionary is hoping her time in China will have a positive impact. Doris Garrett of Conroe, Texas, spent 38 years as a teacher in Nigeria, then retired and volunteered for the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission's Teachers to China program. "The students were so gracious and so open to learning," she said. Although sharing the Christian faith is forbidden in China, Garrett said she was surprised by the students' knowledge of Christianity and their thirst to discover new spiritual information. "They all knew about the concept of the Holy Spirit and they were interested in knowing what I believed. The Chinese want to make friends and learn about cultures other than their own," she said. After 38 years of missionary service, why does Garrett spend her own retirement money to return to the mission field? "If you're truly Christian, then you never go into retirement when it comes to sharing his love and your gifts," she said.

### Looking Back...

#### 10 years ago

Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, the last layman to be elected SBC president in 1972-74, challenges a statement by W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Church, Dallas, that a laity-led church is "a weak church anywhere on God's earth."

#### 20 years ago

First Church, Hattiesburg, becomes the first Southern Baptist church in Mississippi to lease a complete television channel when broadcasts begin to air on the 10,000-subscriber Hattiesburg Cablevision system.

#### 50 years ago

Mississippian H. Leo Eddleman, Southern Baptist missionary in Palestine, meets with President Harry S. Truman in observance of World Mission Day and reports that Arab-Jewish relations in Palestine are "utterly hopeless."



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

## New churches needed

"Start-a-church commitment Sunday" will be observed March 24 in churches throughout the Southern Baptist Convention. Of course there are people who would ask, "Why?"

There are approximately 2,000 Baptist churches in Mississippi affiliated with our convention. Do we need 100 more? Some folks would argue that we need better churches, not more churches.

Church buildings are expensive to construct and maintain. Across America there are many half-empty, huge, expensive church buildings. Is the solution "more churches?"

Today there are 261.6 million people in the U.S. This is a 5.2% increase in population over that recorded in the 1990 census. In 2050, the increase will be up to 392 million, or 50% more than today's population. The Home

Mission Board's "Research Review" is predicting that many of those comprising this increase will reside in Dixie.

Southern Baptists start a new church a day. At least 7,625 churches have been constituted since 1972. From 1972 to 1990, an average of 359 churches were organized each year (see related article below). Some 39% are started in rural areas, in which resides 25% of the U.S. total population. These are not large churches — the typical 20-year-old church reports 161 members. The typical new church gains most of its members from other churches.

New churches are much more efficient in baptisms than older churches. Even after 20 years, new congregations will baptize more than older congregations. We lose 20% of all new churches in their

first 14 years, with urban and large city churches more apt to disband or leave the SBC.

Mississippi's population increased from 2,575,000 in 1990 to 2,669,000 in 1994. This increase means 94,000 new people in the Magnolia State. Should we have started 94 new churches in that time frame?

In the 10-year span 1990-2000, the population of the state is projected to increase from 2,810,000 to 3,139,000 (Source: Mississippi's Education & Research Center, Jackson). How many new churches are needed for this additional 330,000 people?

The stronger churches and associations in our state are to be commended for "lifting up your eyes" (surveying) and seeing the fields are "white unto harvest" (starting new work). The first step to success is a commitment.

## First person...

## Thank God for "real" Christian women!

By Ted Lindwall

In our Sunday morning service this week, when a sister we shall call "Anita" stood up to give her testimony, everyone knew to listen closely. Anita is only a year old in Christ, and has come out of the most degrading life possible for a woman. Though still so young in Christ, she teaches the Bible every week to 60 or more people who gather to hear her in two homes in Guatemala City. Almost every week, people are saved in those homes.

"The Lord is always with us and his work is marvelous!" Anita began. "On Tuesday, I was to be at work by 9 a.m. I needed to make four visits before leaving for work, leaving a birthday present in one of the homes. After making my visits, I went to catch my bus. I walked by a man who cursed me as I passed him. I turned around to see him, and saw that he had a huge bulge sticking out of his face around one of his eyes. So I walked back to him and asked if there were anything I could do to help him.

"Yes, you can give me bus fare so I can go to the hospital," he answered. He explained that he had just been attacked by four men.

"I told him that I would take him to the hospital, since it is close to where I work. I gave him the money for both of our fares. But when the bus came up, he said, 'They won't let me get on the bus.'

"I told him, 'Yes, they will. Get on with me.' The bus stopped, and when we climbed on board the bus driver looked at us and said, 'Get in, I won't charge you anything.'

"We sat down together, and I began to tell him about the Lord. Everybody on the bus looked at me like I was crazy. After a little while, the man said, 'But I am a thief!'

"I told him, 'You are the kind of people the Lord loves the most!'

"Then I told him how the Bible says, 'though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as white as snow.'

"He began to cry and everybody was watching us. After a little while, I asked him if he wanted to receive Christ as his Savior. He said yes, so I told him, 'If you want to receive Christ as your Savior, stand up and raise your hand.'

"He stood right up and raised his hand. The bus driver stopped the bus right then, and the bus driver and everybody else on the bus stood up with me and the man!

"The bus driver told everybody on the bus, 'Thank God, there are real Christians like this lady!'

Anita's face was shining like the face of an angel when she concluded: "Thank God, he is willing to use any of us. I lived a terrible life before, but that

woman I used to be is now dead."

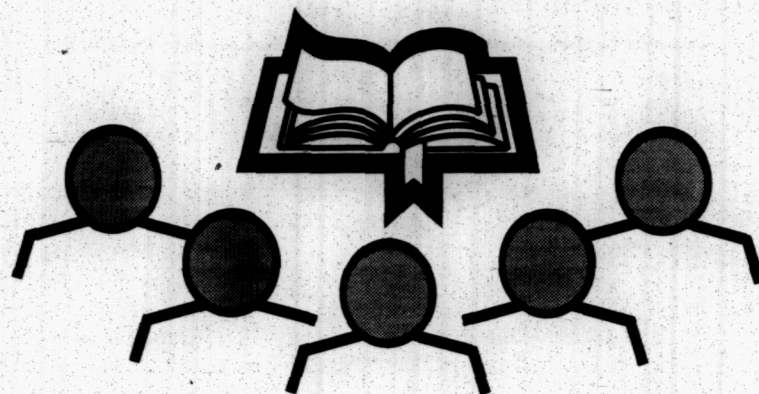
She sat down. With that, a silence came upon the church. We knew we had heard a testimony such as few are ever privileged to hear. For my part, I shall never remove from my memory the image of that grotesque looking thief standing up in the bus, with his hand raised high, saying: "I receive Christ as my Savior!"

Nor will I ever forget Anita, who rejoiced that the sinful woman many had known before was now dead and the love of Jesus is now her glory!

Lindwall is an FMB missionary in Guatemala City. This article is reprinted from a Feb. 28 report he sent to state Baptist papers.

START-A-CHURCH  
COMMITMENT SUNDAY

March 24, 1996



## Gather Disciples Around God's Word

For church-starting information and a church-starting commitment form call Home Mission Board Customer Services, 1 800 634-2462

HMB

## THE FRAGMENTS

## Bad spellers of the world, untie!

Newspapers are notorious for making mistakes. Now and then you can even find a few in church bulletins: "Art came home from the hospital where he had been recovering from a head injury caused by coming in touch with a live wife"; or "There is joy in the presence of the angels over one singer who repents."

And please watch those sermon titles: 11:00 Sermon — "Evil Members in the Church." The vested choir will sing, "Who

Could it Be?"

Errors even creep into advertisements. A store ad read: "Why go elsewhere and be cheated when you can come here." The "wife who drives from the back seat isn't any worse than the husband who cooks from the dining room table."

Then there was the sign in Oslo, Norway: "English Spoken, American Understood." But perhaps my favorite is: "All is well that ends." — GH

## One-fifth of new churches lost in 14 years

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — One-fifth of all Southern Baptist church starts are gone from the convention's record before their 14th birthday, according to a study by the Home Mission Board's (HMB) research division.

The study, designed to learn more about the early stages of church life cycles, discovered the first seven years are the most critical period for losing churches through disbanding, reverting to mission status, merging with another congregation, or breaking away from the convention. Researchers analyzed the records of 7,265 churches constituted between 1972-90. An average 359 churches were constituted annually, reported Richie Stanley, director of HMB Planning and Services Research Department.

Of those studied, 16% were gone from the Southern

Baptist Convention (SBC) role by 1993. Of churches 14 years and older in that group, 20% were gone, Stanley wrote in the study.

Stanley offered three options Southern Baptists may consider for responding to lost churches:

- Start more churches for a larger net gain.
- Start churches with a greater chance of survival. The study did not suggest what factors safeguard a church from being dissolved or leaving the convention.

- Develop programs and strategies to conserve existing churches. Southern Baptists might reconsider how soon they expect a church to become self-supporting and constitute as a church, Stanley wrote. Currently the HMB promotes a mission becoming self-supporting in five years.

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# Miss. pastor, evangelist named evangelism director

S.A. "Sonny" Adkins, pastor of Forest Church, Forest, was elected as the state's new director of evangelism at the March 7 meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) executive committee at the Baptist Building in Jackson.

Adkins

Adkins, 55, will begin work as evangelism director in late April. He replaces J. Garland McKee of

Clinton, who retired in December 1995 after five years as director.

Adkins, a full-time evangelist from 1977-84, has pastored Forest Church since 1988.

He has also served as pastor of:

— New Hebron Church, New Hebron (1984-88).

— Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale (1973-77).

— Spring Hill Ave. Church, Mobile, Ala. (1971-73).

— Central Church, McComb (1969-71).

— Calvary Church, Silver Creek (1966-69).

Adkins is a trustee of the Southern Baptist Convention's

Annuity Board in Dallas, and was serving as a member of the MBCB executive committee when elected to his new job.

He has represented the Mississippi Baptist Convention on mission trips to Japan and Zimbabwe.

The Hattiesburg native is a 1962 graduate of William Carey College in Hattiesburg, and he holds a master of religious education degree ('65) from New Orleans Seminary in New Orleans.

Adkins and his wife, the former Jean Bourn of Oakvale, have been married for nearly 35 years. She is an elementary school teacher in the Forest school system.

They have two adult children: Scott, 28, minister of music at Fellowship Church in Rome, Ga.; and Eric, 25, who works for the telecommunications company SkyTel in Jackson.

Adkins will manage a department tasked with a number of important functions, including personal witness training, an annual

statewide evangelism conference in January, and an annual statewide youth evangelism conference in December.

Current evangelism department staffers include consultants James P. Fancher (who has served as interim evangelism director since January), Hollis Bryant, Carlie Hill, and secretary Patsy Bozeman.

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## NOBTS trustees approve 5% budget hike, elect laity

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) trustees, during their annual spring meeting March 12-13, elected three laymen as chief officers to work with the new seminary president and approved a record \$9.66 million operating budget.

Trustees met in the Leavell Center for Evangelism and Church Growth, directed since 1993 by Charles S. Kelley Jr. who was elected Feb. 23 as the seminary's eighth president.

After nine years of leadership by pastors, trustees elected what may be a unique situation for any Southern Baptist agency board: laymen serving in every top position. All nominated for their positions by pastors, new trustee board officers are William M. Hamm Jr., a retired mechanical contractor from Shreveport, La., chairman; Arnold A. Burk, a pharmacist from London, Ark., vice chairman; and William A. Hanberry, a retired commercial contractor from Hattiesburg, secretary-treasurer.

A new fee schedule, rent charges, and salary information were included in the 1996-97 budget adopted by trustees. The seminary operates on a Aug. 1 to July 31 fiscal year.

The new budget is a 5% increase over the current year's budget. The increase will come from a 6.3% boost of \$319,765 from SBC Cooperative Program funds, as well as other revenue increases amounting to \$143,677.

The new matriculation fee will be \$800 per semester for the seminary's undergraduate, master's, and non-degree programs. The seminary's doctoral degree fees will increase from \$900 to \$950 per semester.

The new budget includes a 3% faculty and staff salary and retirement increase. Approximately 65% of the overall budget is allocated for salary costs. Gary Enfinger, chairman of the trustees' instruction committee, said he wanted seminary faculty to know trustees are "their best cheerleaders and their strongest prayer warriors." Enfinger is pastor of Thomasville (Ala.) Church.

The 40-member board of trustees met for three hours in their plenary session Wednesday afternoon, March 13. Kelley told the trustees that NOBTS started the 1995-96 academic year with more than a 3% increase over the previous year; second semester enrollment is 4% higher than the year before. Current enrollment is 2,240.

During the 13-month search for a new president, two new extension center campuses were started, along with a Church Leadership Certificate program, which has enrolled 153 students in three states, including Mississippi.

Kelley also reported on the seminary's regular 10-year self-study and reaffirmation visit, and noted accreditation guidelines limit institutional comments prior to the final evaluation of the agencies, but that "our results were very positive."

Among the tasks at hand, Kelley said he will be working with administrators and faculty through the spring to formulate proposals to be presented at a special full trustee board meeting June 13.

In other action, trustees:

— heard a proposal from Harrison Olang, president of the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Arusha, Tanzania, concerning the establishment of a

formal relationship between IBTS and NOBTS.

— accepted the retirement of Billy K. Smith, effective March 31. Smith, who most recently served as interim president, has been provost and academic dean of the graduate faculty since 1992; he joined the faculty in 1976 as professor of Old Testament and Hebrew.

— heard of two presidential appointments. C. Ferris Jordan, who will be interim provost, has been NOBTS professor of adult education and J.M. Frost Baptist Sunday School Board Professor of Christian Education since 1978. Charles Register, the new director of the Leavell Center for Evangelism and Church Growth, joined the faculty in 1994 as an assistant professor of evangelism after serving as pastor of First Church, Cantonment, Fla., from 1989-94. Kelley noted he wants to go back to the old model of having the center's director as a member of the seminary's administrative council.

— promoted Walter Brown to professor of Old Testament and Hebrew; Sidney Buckley to professor of voice, occupying the Lallage Feazel Chair of Church Music II; Rick Byargeon to associate professor of Old Testament and Hebrew, occupying the J. Wash Watts Chair of Old Testament; Dennis Cole to professor of biblical archaeology, occupying the McFarland Chair of Archaeology; Paula Stringer to associate professor of childhood education; and William Warren to professor of New Testament and Greek.

— granted tenure to Byargeon; Argile Smith, assistant professor of preaching, occupying the J.D. Grey Chair of Preaching.



## Out of the ashes...

Like Alabama's volunteers, over 125 Mississippi Baptists joined hands Dec. 11, 1993, to help rebuild the Springhill Freewill Baptist Church in Amite County. The African-American church building had been razed by arsonists on April 4, 1993. Members of First Church, Magnolia — including Ben Stewart (right) — worked alongside members of the Mississippi Brotherhood's Volunteer Construction Fellowship and residents of the Springhill community to restore the church's sanctuary. Andrew Felder (left) was construction foreman for the project. (BR file photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

## Alabama Baptists help rebuild burned churches

By Carrie L. Brown

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP) — Among those helping rebuild three black churches in Alabama's Greene County that burned in December and January will be several Alabama Baptist associations and the Alabama State Convention.

Billy Nutt, director of associational and cooperative missions for the Alabama Convention, said Alabama Baptists will be giving money to the churches and assisting in the rebuilding process.

Authorities have labeled as suspicious the fires that destroyed the Mount Zoar, Little Zion, and Mount Zion churches, all in Greene County. Another black church, New Liberty Baptist in the Tyler community of Dallas County, burned in late February. A white fireman was charged March 6 with arson in the New Liberty burning.

State fire marshal John Robison said there was no indication the New Liberty fire was connected to the fires in Greene County, none of which have been classified as arson.

According to the Alabama-based Klanwatch organization, an arm of the Southern Poverty Law Center, there have been at least

28 suspicious fires at predominantly black churches in Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, Louisiana, Texas, and Alabama since 1989. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms has been investigating 17 suspicious fires in six states, but so far no evidence of any widespread conspiracy has been found.

Although none of the churches burned were Southern Baptist churches, the Alabama Baptist State Convention is working to help the damaged churches.

Nutt said the three churches that were burned in Greene County, as well as three other churches that were vandalized within the last several months, have been offered assistance. An offer of help also will be extended to the New Liberty congregation.

Nutt said several churches out of state also have inquired about helping the burned churches.

In addition to providing funds, Nutt said several Baptist construction teams will be available to help in the rebuilding of the churches.

Brown is a correspondent for *The Alabama Baptist* newsjournal.



## Executive Committee signs pact with consultant; notes savings

NASHVILLE (BP) — The Executive Committee has signed a contract with an Atlanta management consultant firm and released the first estimate of savings associated with the anticipated restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Representatives of the Implementation Task Force (ITF), a 10-member group created by the SBC Executive Committee last September to oversee the implementation of the restructuring, have an initial meeting March 7 with Coopers and Lybrand, LLP, A Professional Services firm. Coopers was selected from among several national concerns which submitted bids because "Coopers provides significant expertise in assisting organizations with change," according to Ted Warren, ITF member

spokesman and chief operating officer of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Warren said the Atlanta firm will have Southern Baptists on its team and plans to give the SBC high priority by making "national-level consultants" available.

"We are not employing Coopers and Lybrand for them to tell us what to do, but to assist us in achieving all the effectiveness we envision," Warren said.

The "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring plan, approved by messengers at the 1995 SBC annual meeting in Atlanta, calls for the merging, consolidation and/or dissolution of several entities and ultimately reducing the number from 19 to 12. A second vote on SBC Bylaw 15, which lists individually the various agencies, is

required and is scheduled during the 1996 annual meeting this June in New Orleans.

The cost savings, Warren said, will be substantial, although he emphasized the dollar amounts are early estimates. During the 1996-97 SBC fiscal year (October through September), Warren said the ITF believes a savings of \$289,000 will be achieved from entities being dissolved or modified. Under the restructuring plan, the Education Commission would be dissolved and functions of the Historical Commission, Stewardship Commission, and Southern Baptist Foundation would be assigned to other agencies, effective June 1997.

During fiscal 1997-98, Warren said, the ITF expects a savings of \$1.1 million.

## COMBE chooses officers, plans retreat

The Conference of Mississippi Baptist Evangelists (COMBE) installed Jimmy Knight of Laurel as president and elected other officers at the annual luncheon for vocational evangelists held during the State Evangelism Conference in Jackson.

Other officers chosen were Danny Lanier, Little Rock, vice president; Martha Barrows, Lucedale, secretary-treasurer; Jerry Swimmer, Iuka, program chairman; and Richard Bradley, Jackson, pastor advisor.

On Saturday before the Evangelism Conference, COMBE members met at Van Winkle

Church, Jackson, for a one-day retreat. They shared music and testimonies, enjoyed fellowship along with their families, and heard speakers on several topics.

At the Tuesday luncheon meeting, the evangelists agreed to plan a similar retreat in conjunction with the 1997 State Evangelism Conference.

"The retreat was a tremendous opportunity for fellowship and encouragement for all the evangelists who attended," said Knight. "I hope every Baptist evangelist in the state can attend the retreat next year."

On Sunday the evangelists served churches in the Jackson metro area in preaching and/or music. A number of professions of faith and other commitments were reported in these services.

The weekend activities were coordinated through the office of James Barrows Fancher, interim director, Department of Evangelism, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

"We appreciate the Department of Evangelism and their understanding and support for those of us who have been called to the specific ministry of evangelism," said Knight.

Anyone interested in information on COMBE membership may call Knight at (601) 428-1366 or contact any officer or member.



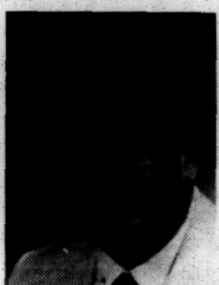
Knight



Lanier



Barrows



Swimmer

## Mission Mississippi, area churches plan intimacy workshop, pastor training

A marriage intimacy training class and workshop featuring David and Teresa Ferguson, directors of Intimate Life Ministries in Austin, Texas, will be held April 12-13 at First Church, Jackson.

The workshop is sponsored by Mission Mississippi, Jackson area churches, and the Center for Marriage and Family Intimacy in Austin, where the Fergusons serve as professional associates.

The Fergusons, who have been married for more than 30 years, regularly appear on the "Intimate Life" radio program and have authored a number of books, including *The Pursuit of Intimacy*, *Intimate Encounters*, and *Parenting with Intimacy*.

A special training class will be conducted from 6-9 p.m. on Friday, April 12, targeting church leadership with an overview of an intimate marriage and family

ministry in the local church.

The training class is designed to help ministers and lay leadership couples develop counseling skills and enhance their personal relationship.

The workshop on Saturday, April 13, will begin with registration at 8 a.m. and conclude at 4:30 p.m. It is designed for married couples and singles planning to get married.

Topics include training in how to make better marriages; parenting; marriage preparation; and healing for troubled relationships.

Workshop admission of \$25 per person includes conference materials. Nursery/childcare is not provided. Meals are not provided.

For more information, contact Mission Mississippi in Jackson at (601) 353-6477, or the Center for Marriage and Family Intimacy toll-free at (800) 881-8008.

## Elliff to speak in Miss.

Tom Elliff, pastor of First Southern Church in Del City, Okla., will speak in eight Mississippi cities on April 1 and 2. Elliff will likely be nominated for the post of president of the Southern Baptist Convention at its annual June meeting in New Orleans.

Elliff will speak at the following churches on April 1: Wheeler Grove, Corinth, 9 a.m.; Colonial Heights, Jackson, noon; Parkview, Greenville, 3 p.m.; and Meadowview, Starkville, 7 p.m.

On April 2, he will speak at: State Boulevard Church, Meridian, at 10 a.m.; West Ellisville Church, Ellisville, at 1 p.m.; Friendship Church, McComb; and Four Mile Creek Church, Escatawpa, at 6:30 p.m.

## Revival Dates

**Artesia (Lowndes):** March 24-29; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Gary Jackson, evangelist; Steve and Becky Carver, music; Regan Rye, pastor.

**Antioch, Brandon:** March 24-27; services, 7 p.m.; Perry Sanderford, evangelist; Donnie and Cynthia Stuart, Pelahatchie, music; Marion Spence, pastor.

**Antioch, Louin:** March 22-24; Fri.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m., dinner on the ground, and 1:30 p.m. singing by the Jones County Junior College BSU Ensemble; BSU JCJC, preaching and singing; Jim Pender, pastor.

**Good Hope (Newton):** March 29-31; Sunday, Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., and 7 p.m. Fri.-Sat.; Rodney Anderson, evangelist; Marion Felton, music; Gerald Roberson, pianist; William Spencer, pastor.

**First, Kosciusko:** March 24-27; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., noon and 7 p.m.; Danny Lanier, evangelist; R.L. and Beth

Sigrest, music; Barry Corbett, pastor.

**First, Tunica:** March 24-27; Sunday, Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., worship, 11 a.m., and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., noon and 7 p.m.; Tommy Tutor, Clarksdale, evangelist; Tommy Lane, Coldwater, music; Joe T. Lusby, pastor.

**Parkway, Houston:** March 24-27; 7 nightly; Gary Bowlin, Brandon, evangelist; Billy Nelson, Derma, music; David Kendall, pastor.

**First, Fulton:** March 24-27; James Messer, evangelist; Johnnie Masters, music; Roy McHenry, pastor.

**Pelahatchie, Pelahatchie:** March 31-April 5; rise and shine service, 7 a.m. daily; worship, 7 p.m.; Chuck Hampton, Florence, evangelist; Hubert Greer, Wesson, music; Mike Glenn, pastor.

**Como (Panola):** April 2-4; 110th anniversary; 6:30 p.m. nightly; James Ruffin, Meridian, evangelist; Scott Brooks, Sardis, music; Phillip A. Brasher Jr., pastor.

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What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS

Matthew 10:27 NAS

March 21, 1996

HouseTops is a **Baptist Record** supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's **Office of Communication**.



Hayes Graves of Brandon, installs shelves on the new Mississippi Baptist Disaster Unit being constructed at Central Hills Baptist Retreat at Kosciusko. Graves, a retired contractor, is coordinating construction of the unit which will replace the present one in use since 1978.



William Wright, pastor of Rocky Point Church, Carthage, spray paints bunk frames for the new disaster relief unit. Wright serves as a "blue cap" supervisor on the unit and is a mechanic. The unit is scheduled to be completed by spring disaster training at Central Hills, April 12-13.

Bill Purvis of Ethel and Hayes Graves of Brandon, install a desk on the new disaster relief unit. Purvis serves as a driver on the unit which is a 48-foot double axle 1985 Great Dane Electronic Van. It will have the capacity of serving 20-25,000 hot meals per day. The Brotherhood Department oversees operation of state Baptist disaster work.



Photos by  
Tim Nicholas

## LAD/CRUSADER DAY 1996

"RUNNING" THE GOOD RACE!

CENTRAL HILLS BAPTIST RETREAT

**APRIL 20, 1996**

**9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

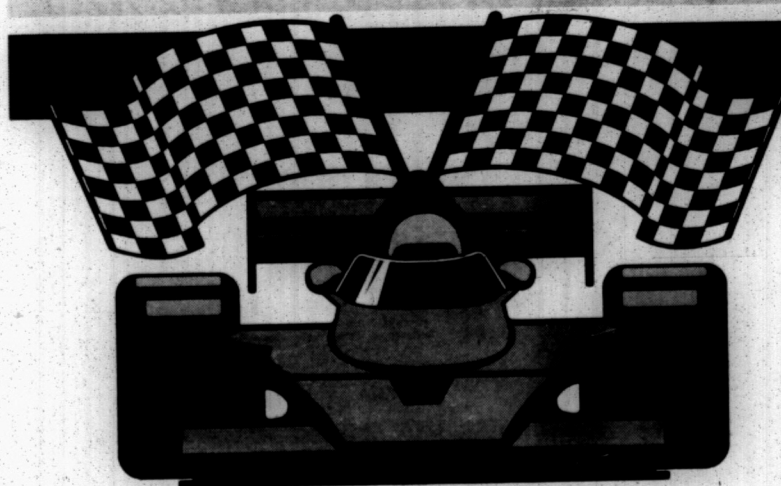
**COST: \$2.50**

Bring a sack lunch.

(No meal will be provided.)

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE: APRIL 15**

If you are interested in registering, contact the Brotherhood Dept. of the MBCB at 968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651.





# Let's pray this day for...

## March 22-April 18, 1996

Prayer Ministry Office • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

*"Prayer should be the first business of the morning and last at night."*

Martin Luther

that God will inspire us to be intercessors for people of World A (those who have little opportunity to hear the Gospel)

for Mark Cox, missionary to Taiwan, who has taken prayer walks around his neighborhood and in mainland China

for the two million visitors expected during the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, July 19-August 4. Many Olympic visitors will come from countries closed to missionaries.

praise God the Zambian president has promised to start granting regular visas again to our missionaries in Zambia

that we will actively take part in our church's prayer ministry

that we will discipline ourselves in maintaining our personal prayer time every day

for the Christian Performing Arts Festival, Alta Woods Baptist Church, Jackson, March 29-30

for missionaries to walk closely with the Lord and be effective in their witness and fruitful in their work

that the 800 prayerlines of Miss. Baptists, the HMB and FMB will be used effectively to get more people to pray for those requests

for government leaders in our nation and around the world. Pray that all leaders will experience God's love

for overseas Christians to be concerned about winning their own nations and that they will send and support foreign missionaries to other nations

as you read the newspaper and listen to newscasts pray that the pending peace treaties between nations will be ratified

that Satan will not blind the saved and trip them up in sin and false priorities

that we will take Bold Mission Thrust and world evangelization seriously

that all Christians will be thankful that Jesus died on the cross for their sins

that all our churches will adopt the strategy of prayer for nations who have closed doors to the gospel

that all people can know the joy of a resurrected Lord

for cross cultural understanding whether it be with foreign nationals, ethnic or racial groups in the U.S.

for an ongoing ministry of intercessory prayer in each church

for our three Baptist colleges in Miss. - Blue Mountain, William Carey and Mississippi College

for the health and ministry of Billy Graham and his wife, Ruth

for the work of the Christian Action Commission as it seeks to have a Christian influence on the Miss. Legislature

for the salvation of those involved in crime throughout Miss., also for the chaplains who counsel them

that Miss. Baptists will expand our mission ministry through continued cooperation and giving through the Cooperative Program

for the starting and nurturing of more churches throughout our Baptist Convention

for mission volunteers who plan to go on a long or short mission trip this summer

for the spiritual ministry to the deaf in our churches

that quick information transmitted by E-Mail will be for the glory of God and for helping people



## MAY

The numbers indicate the day of the month and the year of birth. For instance, 3-76 means May 1976.

4-77 Miss Terri A. Lee, Union University, Box 956; 2447 Highway 45 Bypass, Jackson, TN 38305; Parents: Harry G., Jr. & Linda J.; General Evangelism; SERVE IN JAPAN

10-31 Miss Laura R. Hearn, BP 1353, Lome, TOGO; Parents: James G. & Brenda H., General Evangelism

10-79 Mr. Micah P. Thornton, Apartado 58, Bulevares, Edo. de Mexico, 53140, MEXICO; Parents: Harold L. & Susan M., Financial Administration

11-92 Mr. Drew Braswell, Av. Marechal Rondon, 288, 13.073-320 Campinas, Sp, BRAZIL; Parents: Larry & Alicia, Outreach Evangelism

13-76 Mr. Jeremy R. Racey, University of Tennessee, 1311 Lake Loudon Road, P.O. Box 247, Knoxville, TN 37919; Parents: Michael D. & Annette E., Theological Education; SERVE IN CHILE

20-88 Mr. John R. McCall, P.O. Box 5864, Tanga, TANZANIA; Parents: Dennis F. & Margaret, Agriculture

21-86 Mr. Eddie Jones, 875 Adams Drive, Greenville, MS 38704; Parents: Eddie & Barbara, Pastor

22-95 Miss Madison C. Marshall, P.O. Box 1949, Prentiss, MS 39474; Parents: Philip J. and Sheila T., General Evangelism SERVE IN THAILAND

23-79 Mr. Adam L. Graves, Casilla 1417, Concepcion, CHILE; Parents: Edgar L. & Marilyn L., General Evangelism

25-88 Mr. Philip M. Hearn, BP 1353, Lome, TOGO; Parents: James G. & Brenda H., General Evangelism

29-81 Miss Kitty M. Thornton, Apartado 58, Bulevares, Edo. de Mexico, 53140 MEXICO; Parents: Harold L. & Susan M., Financial Administration



Mississippi Baptist Secretaries Conference  
April 22 & 23

Camp Garaywa  
Clinton, Miss.

For more information about this conference, contact the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Dept. of the MBCB at 968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651.



# MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS IN BROADCASTING WORKSHOP

Tenth Annual  
Mississippi Baptists in  
Broadcasting Workshop

"Helping to Bring Mississippi and the World to Jesus"

**April 19-20, 1996**  
**Calvary Baptist Church, Jackson**

## Workshop Leaders:

- Doug Price
- Dennis Clark
- Steve Guidry
- Bruce Cole
- David Edmonds
- Ken Sims
- Chip Turner

## REGISTRATION FORM

**Mississippi Baptists in Broadcasting Workshop**  
**April 19-20, 1996 • Calvary Baptist Church • Jackson**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Office Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Church Name \_\_\_\_\_

I need a reservation for ☐ all activities on Friday and Saturday \$25 enclosed  
☐ all activities with group of 4 or more \$20 enclosed  
☐ Friday Awards Banquet only \$15 enclosed  
☐ Saturday Workshop only \$15 enclosed

Please mark the workshops you will attend. This information is needed by registration deadline because workshops will be limited to a certain number of people. Every effort will be made to accommodate any adjustments.

### 9:15 AM CONFERENCES (mark one)

- ☐ Producing a Worship Service - Basic
- ☐ Producing a Worship Service - Advanced
- ☐ Shooting and Editing with the Single Camera
- ☐ Basic Audio in the Church
- ☐ Media Promotion in Your Church & Community

### 1:00 PM CONFERENCES (mark one)

- ☐ Producing a Worship Service - Basic
- ☐ Basic Audio in the Church Hands-On
- ☐ Media Promotion in Your Church & Community
- ☐ Shooting and Editing With the Single Camera
- ☐ Producing Pageants on a Budget

Reservations are non-refundable after April 9, 1996.

Make check payable to: **Mississippi Baptist Convention Board**

Mail to: **Farrell Blankenship, MBIB, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530**

If you would like more information about the Mississippi Baptist Broadcasting Workshop, contact the Broadcast Services Dept. of the MBCB at 968-3800 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651.

## GA FATHER/DAUGHTER OVERNIGHT

Camp Garaywa - April 26-27, 1996

Deadline: Monday, April 22, 1996

### Registration Form

Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Daughter's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Church Name \_\_\_\_\_ Association \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of People \_\_\_\_\_ x \$23 per person = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Amount Enclosed)  
Make checks payable to WMU

Mail to:

**WMU - Father/Daughter Overnight, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205**

## STATE SINGLE ADULT PICNIC

**SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 1996**  
**GRAND GULF STATE PARK**

[North of Port Gibson, Hwy 61 to Nuclear Power Plant (red-light), go west]

(Pioneer Day at the Park)

### Provision

11:30 Music by Wayne Pinkerton, Min. of Activities, FBC, Greenville, and former short stop for Texas Rangers

12:15 Picnic with drinks and paper goods provided (bring your own picnic)

## "BUSTING LOOSE"

**30 Years' Ministry To  
Single Adults**

**Gulfshore Baptist Assembly**

**May 25-27, 1996**

### "BUSTING LOOSE"

#### CONFERENCES INCLUDE:

- Bible Study • Single Parenting • Singles in Missions • Building a Healthy Self-esteem
- Breaking the Hurting Cycle • How to Laugh at Myself • Forgiveness • Asking and Giving
- Ministry Thru Crafts • How to Work: Business Ethics

### "BUSTING LOOSE"

#### ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Swamp Tour • Canoe Trip • Adventure Hike
- Ship Island • Jet Skiing • New Orleans Trip
- Beach Activities • Pass Christian Tour

### Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Church \_\_\_\_\_  
Room and Meals \_\_\_\_\_ "A" Unit \$85.90  
(per person, 2 in a room)  
Room and Meals \_\_\_\_\_ "C" Unit \$79.80  
(per person, 3 or more)

Return this form or any request for Gulfshore information to:  
Frank Simmons, Manager, Gulfshore Baptist Assembly,  
100 First Street, Pass Christian, MS 39571-3299.

Telephone: (601) 452-7263

For more information contact Glenn Shows at 1-800-748-1651.



*Sisters, Brothers, gather 'round,  
stand with us on*  
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## MISSISSIPPI CONFERENCE ON PREACHING AND WORSHIP

*Calvary Baptist Church, Tupelo*  
**May 13-14, 1996**

**PURPOSE:** To provide an in-depth workshop on Bible preach-  
ing, focusing on preparation and delivery - practical  
helps for weekly sermon preparation.

**FINANCES:** There is no charge for this conference.

**PERSONNEL:**

*Brian Harbour*, pastor, First Baptist Church, Richardson, Tex.  
*Stan Fornea*, pastor, Morrison Heights Baptist Church, Clinton  
*Argile Smith*, professor of preaching, New Orleans Baptist  
Theological Seminary  
*Bob Robinson*, minister of music, First Baptist Church, Tupelo



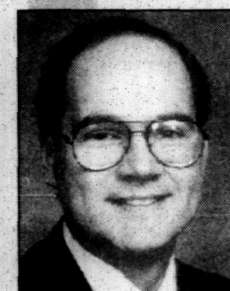
**Brian Harbour**



**Stan Fornea**



**Argile Smith**



**Bob Robinson**

*Sponsored by*  
**CHURCH ADMINISTRATION-PASTORAL MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT**  
**MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION BOARD**  
*"Helping to Bring Mississippi and the World to Jesus"*

# RUN RACE

MISSISSIPPI ACTEENS CONVENTION

**April 12-13, 1996**

Gulfshore Baptist Assembly

"Let us run with endurance the race  
that is set before us."

Hebrews 12:1



**Special Features:**

Kay Bennett, Home Missionary  
Linda Smith, Foreign Missionary  
Rhett Whitley, "Eagle Ministries"  
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**Registration Form**

Church \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Acteens \_\_\_\_\_ Total Reservations \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed \$35 x # \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

There will need to be one adult per seven girls in each room.  
Please attach a list of names, ages, grades, and StudiAct level.

Return this form or any request for Gulfshore information to:

Frank Simmons, Manager, Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, 100 First Street, Pass Christian, MS  
39571-3299 Telephone: (601) 452-7263

No refunds, but can transfer funds to another person.

Registration begins at 4:00 p.m. Meal is at 5:30 p.m. Convention ends with Saturday noon meal.

# HOUSE TOPS





# LifeAnswers

**Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.**  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

*Prayers about my needs and problems have gone unanswered for years. How can I continue to have faith in prayer?*

Prayers are our requests to the Lord; answers are his responses to us. It's not that your needs and problems are unimportant to God, but his wisdom and timing are different from yours. When expectations get in the way, we demand that God answer prayers on our timetable according to an outcome we have already planned. It is difficult to understand why unmet needs and unsolved problems persist after years of prayer, but you must see God as your true Father who will answer in his time. God is not an eternal Santa Claus. He knows the needs of his children and will respond when it is best for them. When you pray the Lord's Prayer, do you really mean, "...your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10, NIV)?

*My biological mother has contacted my adoptive parents*

*after 24 years and wants to meet me. I'm not interested, so how should I respond?*

Your biological mother probably has been preparing for some time to meet you, and you have not had the same opportunity to prepare. You need time to think and pray through this matter. Ask your adoptive parents to act on your behalf, thanking your biological mother for contacting them and retaining her address and telephone number in case you want to contact her in the future. You may never get to that point, but have you thought about what you would like to know if you had the chance to talk with your biological mother? Are you interested in medical information, genetic and family histories, or her spiritual life? You may discover a woman who has endured life's ups and downs, mindful of her mistakes and proud of her victories. You may also inherit hurts you never expected, but remember that God's love is sufficient to help us through anything (Rom. 8:38-39).

**Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.**

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WASHINGTON (BP) — The **Christian Life Commission** elected **Dwayne Hastings**, news and information coordinator at Southeastern Seminary, as its director of communications during its semiannual meeting March 7. The trustees also voted to give the CLC's 1996 John Leland Religious Liberty Award to evangelical theologian Carl F.H. Henry. The board unanimously approved Hastings to fill a position left vacant Jan. 1 when Bill Merrell became vice president of convention relations for the SBC Executive Committee. Hastings is expected to begin working in the CLC's Nashville office April 1.

FORT WORTH (BP) — **Bruce Corley**, dean of Southwestern Seminary's school of theology from 1990-95, was elected by the board of trustees March 13 to return to the faculty as professor of New Testament, effective June 1. The decision came during the board's annual spring meeting, March 11-13 on the school's Fort

## Correction

In the March 14 "Names in the News" column, **Ivo Wilson Livingston Jr.** was incorrectly listed as Ivo Wilson Jr. The Montgomery, Ala., resident died Oct. 25, 1995. He a Mississippi native, and is survived by his mother Laslie, wife Jane, a daughter, and a son.

## Names in the News



**"Sunshiners" Senior Adults Cake Bake** for men only was held at **Fellowship Church, Mathiston.** Pictured from left are Connie Sanderson, first place; James Pollard, second place; and Morelle Breland and Pastor Ralph Cain, who tied for third place. The judge was John Bennett.

Worth campus. Corley resigned as dean March 21, 1995, to accept a position as professor of Christian scriptures at George W. Truett Theological Seminary in Waco, Texas.

**Edythe I. Montroy**, retired Southern Baptist missionary to Nigeria, died March 9. She was 80 years old. Born in Drew, she was appointed as a missionary to Nigeria by the Foreign Mission Board

in 1946. Montroy served on the faculty of Baptist College in Iwo, Nigeria, for nearly 15 years before a serious automobile accident forced her to take medical disability in 1961. She retired in 1971. She was a graduate of Delta State University in Cleveland, and Baptist Bible Institute (now New Orleans Seminary) in New Orleans, La. A funeral service was held March 10 at First Church, Cleveland.

## Just for the Record

**Jayess Church, Jayess**, will sponsor a fish fry on March 23 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, call (601) 587-7592, 833-7511, or 587-2017.

**First Church, Pearl**, will present its annual Passion Play entitled, "The Living Last Supper," on March 30 and 31 at 7 p.m. The presentation includes Easter music from the worship choir of First Church and a dramatic presenta-

tion which includes an exact "living" rendition of Da Vinci's famous painting, "The Last Supper." Call (601) 939-4476 for tickets (free) and information.

**Mississippi College Players** will present **Nonsense**, a musical comedy by Dan Goggin, March 22-26. Performances will be held March 22, 23, 25, and 26 at 7:30 p.m. with a matinee on March 24 at 2 p.m. in Aven Little Theater on campus. Call (601) 925-3453 for tickets.

**Sammy Glass and Family** will be in concert at Salem Church, March 23 at 7 p.m., and Pleasant Hill Church, March 24 at 11 a.m. Both churches are located in Leake County. James White is pastor of Salem Church. Paul Cain is pastor of Pleasant Hill Church.

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## Uniform Achieving potential



By David Mitchell  
Matthew 25

Reading any parable, there are two questions which must be asked: 1) Where does the stress fall in the parable? and 2) About whom did Jesus tell this parable? The parable of the talents is obviously one with end stress, and the focal point, evident in reading the story, is the third character — the "barren rascal" who buried his talent.

**Distribution of resources (vv. 14-15).** Jesus used a familiar storyline as he shared a parable of a master who went away and then returned. In this parable the servants were given money to invest wisely while the master was away. The first servant received five talents. In today's economy a conservative estimate of this amount of money would be approximately \$12,000. The second servant received two talents which would be valued at approximately \$4,800. The third servant received one talent which would be equivalent to \$2,400. Each of the servants was given different amounts because of their different capabilities and gifts. Not everyone in the kingdom of Christ is created equal, and we are not all expected to perform at the same level of competence. However, we are all expected to do our very best and be faithful with what we have been given.

**The servants' response (vv. 16-18).** The first two servants earned 100% yield on their investment. The servant with only one talent made no investment at all. Instead he safeguarded his money for his master's return. The important thing to notice is that this servant has no chance of making any profit because, unlike the others, he risked no loss.

**The master's response (vv. 19-28).** The time of reckoning arrived. The first servant brought the fruit of his wise investment and shared with the master the results of his work. He was praised and rewarded with greater responsibility. The language of verses 21 and 23 are similar, which helps us understand that Jesus made no distinction between the first two servants regarding the degrees of faithfulness. Even though they were not entrusted with the same amount, they both were faithful with the amount they were given.

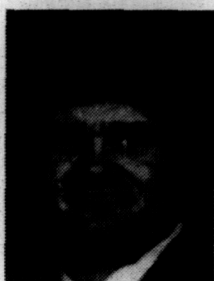
The stress of the parable is on the third servant. This man confessed that he feared his boss and believed that he would not have tolerated the loss of any of his money. The servant returned the master's money but received no praise. It is important to note that the servant's characterization of the master was neither disputed or agreed upon. The servant's error was that he allowed himself to be paralyzed by fear. An easy comparison can be made to the person who is afraid of what worldly pleasures will be sacrificed by becoming a Christian. This person refuses Christ as Savior and chooses to live for self. At the judgment his or her life is required because he or she not only wasted the blood of Jesus by refusing the gift of salvation but also missed God's plan for his/her life.

**The principle explained (vv. 29-30).** God entrusts every Christian with a portion of his resources and expects them to be good stewards. When Christians respond and are good stewards, God's people will be rewarded because they have faithfully followed through on God's commission. Those who fail to use the gifts that God has given them for his glory and benefit will be separated from God and from all good things. An important note for us to make would be to realize that those who profess commitment to God but show no evidence of that in their lives are in the same situation as the third servant.

The stress of this parable lies with the failure of the third servant to be a good steward of what God has given him. The story must have originally been told about the Pharisee who kept God to himself and never shared him with anyone. For us the parable can be applied by helping us decide what we will do with the gift of Christianity God has given us. Each member of the body of Christ has his own gift and his own function given to him by God. They are both for the building up of the church and the spreading of the Gospel. If by timidity, faithlessness, or fear we fail to share the gospel, then we must be failing the God who gave his Son to die in our place.

Mitchell is pastor of Van Winkle Church, Jackson.

## Bible Book Leaders tackle problems



By Clayton Littlejohn  
Titus 1

This third and final of Paul's pastoral epistles is written to Titus, a Gentile believer (Gal. 2:3-5). Paul left him in Crete to show that qualified leaders were needed to confront problems in the church, and wrote him this letter to serve as a manual on how Christians should conduct themselves in an ungodly world.

**Greeting (vv. 1-4).** The Cretans had first heard the gospel at Pentecost (Acts 2:1). We know Paul had been there briefly (Acts 27:7), but little is known about the Christians in Crete outside the book of Titus. Crete, an island south-east of Greece, was famous for its Mt. Ida, the legendary birthplace of the Greek god Zeus. The island was also famous for big lies and low morals. These morals and lies were making their way into the church. It would take godly, qualified leaders to stop it, so Titus was left there to train godly men for this purpose.

Paul called himself the "bondservant of God and apostle of Jesus Christ." The term "bondservant" revealed his humility; "apostle," his authority. The term "chosen" referred — and still refers — to the believers who receive and acknowledge Jesus as Lord and Savior, also known as "the elect" (Eph. 1:4, 1 Pet. 1:1-5, Matt. 24:24). Some were Jews, like Paul, and some were Gentiles, like Titus.

The reward for the chosen is "eternal life" (v. 2). The gift for the chosen is hearing and believing in Jesus through the preaching of godly leaders (v. 3). Titus was one such man (v. 4) whose faith was so like Paul's. Paul identified Titus as "my true child after a common faith." This would have identified Titus as a true believer and given him authority to appoint godly leaders.

**Qualifications of elders and overseers (vv. 5-9).** The word "elders" (v. 5) and "overseer" (v. 7) are interchangeable, and mean "one who shepherds the church of God" (Acts 29:28, 1 Pet. 5:2). Today we use the words "pastor" or "bishop" (Eph. 4:11, 1 Tim. 3:1). Since most churches met in homes rather than one specific location, there was a need for several elders (1:11).

The qualifications for these leaders are given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. Most of the qualifications are self-explanatory: the elder is to be a man, blameless, etc. One qualification that causes problems is "the husband of one wife" (v. 6). Some believe this to be one living wife and others believe this to be one wife at a time, thus allowing a divorced man the position of pastor (or elder). Each pastor and church must make its own decision on this issue. (To study the different views, see **The New American Commentary**, vol. 34, pp. 280-282). These qualifications reveal a man's character and spiritual leadership. If these are met, then a church will have a godly leader who will be able to confront problems in the church in a way that will be pleasing to God, and will edify the believers.

**Dealing with problems (vv. 10-15).** One of the biggest problems in the Cretan church was with those who taught that all male believers must be circumcised (v. 10). This teaching was Judaism, legalism, and heresy. Titus was the illustration that this teaching was false. He was an uncircumcised Gentile leader (Gal. 2:3). The circumcision requirement was upsetting entire households and had to be stopped (v. 11).

The Cretans had a famous prophet, Epimenidas, who declared the "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons" (v. 12). These statements were a poor testimony on anyone, but especially on Christians. Paul wrote that godly leaders were needed to protect the testimony of Christ's church. The method to eradicate slanderers from the church was to "reprove them severely that they may be sound in faith" (v. 13). This would expose the false teachers and cause many to repent of their sins and turn to genuine faith in Christ and his teaching. The "Jewish myths and commandments of men" (v. 14) were a combination of Judaism, legalism, and Christianity which led to bondage, not freedom. The churches then faced these problems, as does the church today. We need qualified men of God to rebuke heresy and teach the truth if we are to win our world to Christ. I encourage you to encourage your leaders when they face these problems.

Littlejohn is pastor of Ingram Church, Baldwin.

## Life and Work Commit steadfastly



By Linda Donnell  
Matthew 7

Life is full of choices — so many that it is often difficult to decide and perhaps even more difficult to make a full commitment to any choice made. With so many attractive options appearing along life's highway, it is easy to give short-term interest and then move on to a more attractive selection down the way. Jesus narrows the decision-making to two major choices. Our selection here will determine the direction of all other choices we make. Considerable time has been spent in detailing the dimensions of discipleship. Now Jesus calls for the listeners to make a choice. What will it be: Christ or the world? Heaven or hell?

**The attraction of the popular way (vv. 13-14).** In explaining the two possibilities of choice, Christ made it clear that the road of sin and the world is wide, and provides for easy access. It is without doubt the most popular route, for it has few demands. But the down side is that this pathway ends in destruction (v. 13).

On the other hand, the way of Christ is narrow, costly, and lonely (v. 14). Certainly Jesus is not using your typical sales technique. Instead of only announcing the attractive details, Jesus "tells it like it is." Like it or not, the life of a disciple of Christ is not easy. It demands a tremendous amount of discipline. It calls for daily self-sacrifice and many stops for loving service along the way. Yet, despite the negatives of the narrow way, this commitment offers the power to meet the realities of life face to face and then meet the ultimate reward of everlasting life.

It is important to note that we cannot travel both roads. Like the Pharisees, many "Christians" try to do so. They talk the religious language and "play church" but never leave the wide road of the world with all of its appetites and associations. They practice an easy Christianity.

**The threat of pretense (vv. 15-20).** In finding the narrow way, Jesus warned of "false prophets" who might "come in sheep's clothing" (v. 15). In other words, there might be religious leaders who look like something they are not. Their talk and religious acts may be deceiving. How then can we distinguish between the genuine and the impostor? Jesus said, "By their fruits you will recognize them..." (v. 20). True faith in Christ results in a character and manner of life which resembles that of the Father. The false teacher is in the business of teaching for what benefits he may receive. His fruits produce a religion which consists mainly in the observance of the externals and may be based on many "thou shalt nots." A close examination of a person's character and conduct, his message and motives, should leave no doubt as to his authenticity. "Christianity is an attitude of the heart to God and to man," according to William Barclay.

**The danger of self-deceit (vv. 21-23).** The warning which Jesus issued against pretense also applies to self-deception. "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord..." (v. 21) is a clear warning to be careful of making religion a routine and mechanical affair. The Pharisees had fooled themselves into thinking that they were righteous. After all, they intellectually believed the right doctrine, spoke the right language, prayed, fasted, and obeyed the laws.

Do we not also do the same thing today? Churches are full of professing Christians each Sunday. We go to church, read the Bible, pray, and even give offerings. What more does Christ want? "Only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (v. 21) is a clear answer. Doing the will of God requires a close relationship with him. Only then can we know his will for our life. This must be a daily, sustained closeness and it does not come easily. Remember that Jesus said the road to heaven is difficult and those who travel it are few! Christ confronts us with the challenge to be genuine — *to be as good as we claim to be*. "We may deceive men with our words but we cannot deceive God" (Psalm 139:2).

Have you made the choice that Jesus issued? If so, what has that choice cost you? What disciplines have become a part of your life as a result of that choice? Does your religion mainly consist of rituals, or is it interwoven in every aspect of your being?

Donnell is a member of First Church, Hattiesburg.



# THE VILLAGE VIEW

## The Baptist Children's Village



Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director

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## Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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# capsules

**CHAPMAN: FOUNDATION'S SOLID OPERATION AHEAD:** NASHVILLE (BP) — The Southern Baptist Foundation, which is to become a corporation of the Executive Committee under the "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention, "will remain a high-trust operation," according to Morris Chapman, Executive Committee president and chief executive officer. Chapman's statement was in response to some inquiries about the future of the foundation, in light of the Executive Committee's vote in September for a new charter, under which the foundation's trustees would be elected by the Executive Committee rather than the Southern Baptist Convention. "It was the intent of the Program and Structure Study Committee (PSSC) that the foundation's work continue at a quality level," Chapman said. "The highest fiduciary integrity will continue under the new arrangement." The seven-member PSSC framed the restructuring, which was approved by messengers to the 1995 SBC annual meeting in Atlanta.

**EXPERIENCING GOD TO AIR IN RUSSIAN: MOSCOW (BP)** — The first-ever broadcast version of the discipleship program "Experiencing God" is scheduled to air over radio waves in Russia starting in April. Broadcast versions are being developed in 10 languages. The program will air for six months on Trans World Radio's short-wave transmitters from Albania in late evening Moscow time to cover western Russia and from Guam in mid-afternoon Moscow time to cover eastern Russia. It will also air over Radio Teos, a local FM radio station in St. Petersburg. Foreign Mission Board missionary Joe DeLeon, who lives in St. Petersburg, will coordinate follow-up for the broadcasts. Russian Baptists who counsel listeners responding to "Word of Life" broadcasts by the Radio and Television Commission will respond as well to listeners of "Experiencing God."

**LOTTIE FORECAST SHOWS THIRD RECORD YEAR: RICHMOND (BP)** — Projections show Southern Baptists last year gave a record \$89.1 million to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, establishing a three-year trend upward. Calculations from early indicators predict an increase for the 1995 offering of \$3.17 million, or 3.69%, from last year's \$85.9 million. Those increases would be the largest in percentage and dollar amount since 1988. Increases in 1993 and 1994 were 2.37% and 3.66%, respectively. "After suffering decreases in 1990 and 1992, it is very gratifying to see three years of continued increases," said Carl Johnson, the board's vice president of finance. The projected figure would provide \$3.73 million for capital spending needs such as new construction and vehicles. The previous two offerings provided \$2.57 million (1995) and \$1.92 million (1994). About \$85.4 million would go to the board's 1996 overseas operating budget, which primarily provides missionary support. Southern Baptists had set a challenge goal of \$100 million for 1995.

**SBC PASTORS JOIN CALL FOR GOP TO STAY PRO-LIFE:** WASHINGTON (BP) — Three Southern Baptist pastors, including Convention President Jim Henry, have joined other religious leaders in calling on the major Republican presidential candidates to maintain the party's support of a constitutional amendment banning abortion. In a recent letter, 16 evangelical and Roman Catholic leaders expressed concern about the campaign by some prominent Republicans to delete or modify the pro-life plank in the party's platform. In addition to Henry, Southern Baptist pastors who signed the letter were Adrian Rogers of Bellevue Church in suburban Memphis, and Ed Young of Second Church, Houston. Henry is pastor of First Church, Orlando, Fla. Others signing the letter included James Dobson, president of Focus on the Family; Bill Bright, president of Campus Crusade for Christ; Charles Colson, chairman of Prison Fellowship Ministries; James Kennedy, head of Coral Ridge Ministries; Charles Swindoll, radio Bible teacher and president of Dallas Theological Seminary; and Richard John Neuhaus, a Catholic priest and president of the Institute on Religion and Public Life.

## Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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MVFO OCWZ YZUSG OCGE, AWH WL EQH, MVFO  
OCWZ YZUSG OCGE? BQZAG OCGE OW THWM  
OCG QXWEVHQOVWHA WL OCGVD LQOCGDA:

GJGTVEF OMGHOI: LWZD

This week's clue: T equals K.

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Isaiah One: Nine.

## Weir pastor's Christ-centered paintings chosen for French Camp Easter exhibit

Bivocational pastor Bob Mamrak of Weir has been selected to display his Christian artwork in a special Easter exhibition March 24-



Mamrak

April 14 at the Zula Blucher Center for the Arts on the campus of French Camp Academy in French Camp. Mamrak, who pastors New Zion Church, Weir, and teaches art and English in the Choctaw County School system, will exhibit 19 of his paintings, which are based on the life of Christ with emphasis on events surrounding the first Easter week.

Mamrak based each of the paintings on a particular verse of Scripture.

"The majority of my paintings revolve around the gospel of

Jesus Christ. They're done in a variety of styles, none of which are particularly realistic. Through distortion and a general assault on the viewers' expectations, my intention is to force people to take a fresh look at Christ," he said.

Mamrak earlier this year was chosen to participate in the Meridian Museum of Art's 23rd annual Bi-State Competition, a juried exhibit designed to showcase contemporary artists in Mississippi and Alabama.

His "Dirge" was one of 75 works selected from over 300 submissions to the Meridian exhibition.

The New Jersey native is a graduate of Rowan College in Glassboro, N.J., and Mississippi State University in Starkville. He is married and has two teenage children.

For more information on the exhibit, contact Jim Hill at French Camp Academy. Telephone: (601) 547-6865.



"Easter Passed Over" is one of 19 paintings by Weir bivocational pastor Bob Mamrak that will be exhibited March 24-April 14 at French Camp Academy. The paintings, each based on a specific Bible verse, depict events surrounding the first Easter week.

## Newest in Books

**The Godmakers: A Legacy of the SBC?** by Bruce T. Gourley. Discusses the impact of religious fundamentalism on the SBC. Providence House Publishers.

**Does God Know How to Tie Shoes?** by Nancy White Carlstrom, illustrated by Lori McElrath-Eslick. "To be shared on a lap or with a small group." Eerdmans, 32 pages.

**Kicking Your Kids out of the Nest**, by Thom Black with Linda Stephenson. Practical steps that enable parents to teach children the way out into the world. Zondervan, 208 pages, \$11.99.

**Great Expectations**, by Robert and Rosemary Barnes. Finding lasting intimacy in your marriage. Zondervan, 208 pages, \$12.99.

**People Sharing Jesus**, by Darrell W. Robinson. A natural, sensitive approach to helping others know Christ. Nelson, 241 pages.

**Renewing America's Soul**, by Howard E. Butt, Jr. A spiritual psychology for home, work, and nation. Revell, 264 pages.

**Marching to a Different Drummer**, by Jim Raymo. Rediscovering missions in an age of affluence and self-interest. Christian Literature Crusade, 216 pages, \$8.95.

**Intimate Allies** by Dan Allender and Tremper Longman III.

Rediscovering God's design for marriage and becoming soul mates for life. Tyndale, 364 pages.

**This Love We Share**, by Harry and Emily Griffith. Daily devotions to bring wholeness to your marriage. 365 pages.

**Evidence of Mercy**, by Terri Blackstock. A novel of suspense by the Clinton resident. Zondervan, 276 pages.

**The Holy Land**. Knopf guide to one of the world's greatest areas: home to Christians, Jews, and Muslims. Many pictures and maps. 480 pages, \$25.

**The Bible and the Human Mind**, by J.C. Metcalfe. A superb study of relevant Greek names regarding man's intellect, emotions, and will. CLC, 139 pages, \$5.95.

**Shadow of A Man** by Harold Dye. Explores the influence of Andrew on the early church. Providence House, 64 pages, \$8.95.

**Seek the Peace of the City**, by Eldin Villafane. A reflection on urban ministry and the urgent need of such a ministry. Eerdmans, 146 pages.

**The Joy of Christian Living**, by Carless Evans. A manual for new believers by a native of Meridian. Ebenezer Ministries, 87 pages.

**The New Crusades**, the New

**Holy Land**, by David T. Morgan. A detailed history of the SBC conflict from 1969-1991. University of Alabama Press.

**Breaking the Cycle of Debt**, by Rodney E. Culpepper. Solid principles for debt-free living. Pepperfield, 162 pages.

**Integrity** by Stephen L. Carter. A strong, detailed, compelling case for one core virtue. Basic Books, 276 pages.

**They Sleep Beneath the Mockingbirds**, by Brandon resident Harold A. Cross. Biographies and Mississippi burial sites of 33 Confederate generals. Southbooks/Southern Heritage Press, 200 pages, \$23.

**Re-Igniting Love and Passion: 24 Marital Checkpoints**, by Guy Greenfield. Veteran marriage and family therapist targets 24 areas of difficulty, offers biblical solutions. Baker Book House, 170 pages, \$9.95.

## Colo. church needs

Colorado has 3.6 million residents, among whom 63,825 are members of 252 Southern Baptist churches.

Several Colorado churches have expressed definite and immediate needs: Fairplay Church needs to complete the installation on its new educational building's heating system; a church in southwest Colorado needs help locating a good used 15-passenger van.

Other possible projects include prayer relationships, evangelism, construction, and church development.

For more information about these and other Partnership requests contact: Partnership Missions Office, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800, or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

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